

Message Text

SECRET

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AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
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WNINTEL, NOFORN, NOCONTRACT, ORCON

E.O. 11652: XGDS-3

TAGS: PORG, WA, SF

SUBJECT: NAMIBIA: SUGGESTION FOR CONTACT GROUP APPROACH
TO SOUTH AFRICA AND FRONT-LINE STATES
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REF: (A) PRETORIA 4566 (B) USUN 3148

1. USUN 3148 (REFTEL B) JUST RECEIVED. WHILE DEPARTMENT
AGREES THAT CONTACT GROUP SHOULD DISCUSS RESPONSES TO
CONTINGENCIES DESCRIBED REFTEL AS WELL AS OTHER POSSIBILI-
TIES, WE HAVE NOT YET SEEN SUFFICIENT INDICATIONS TO

CONVINCE US THAT SOUTH AFRICA DOES IN FACT INTEND TO CITE SWAPO ACTIVITY AND POSSIBLE DISAGREEMENTS WITH NATURE OF UN PRESENCE AS BASIS FOR REFUSAL TO IMPLEMENT SETTLEMENT PROPOSAL ON NAMIBIA. IN VIEW OF FACT THAT VAN HEERDEN HAS FUNCTIONED AS REASONABLE, STRAIGHTFORWARD INFORMAL CHANNEL WITH SAG DURING MUCH OF NAMIBIA NEGOTIATIONS, DEPARTMENT BELIEVES WE SHOULD RESPOND TO HIS CONCERNS (REFTEL A) ALONG LINES OF PARAS BELOW.

2. AS US ROLE IN FUNDING SWAPO TRAVEL IS PUBLIC KNOWLEDGE (PARA 8 REFTEL A), DEPARTMENT WOULD PREFER THAT THE FIVE CLARIFY REPORTS OF CONTACT GROUP - FUNDING FOR SWAPO TRAVEL AND PER DIEM. SUGGEST CONTACT GROUP BRIEF SOUTH AFRICA ON THIS SUBJECT EITHER IN NEW YORK OR PRETORIA. BRIEFING SHOULD BE STRAIGHTFORWARD STATEMENT THAT REPORT FROM VAN HEERDEN'S CONGRESSIONAL SOURCE WAS INCOMPLETE AND SHOULD COVER RATIONALE FOR DECISION BY THE FIVE TO SHARE COST OF ECONOMY, DIRECT-ROUTE AIR TRAVEL AND PER DIEM OF SWAPO DELEGATION PARTICIPATING AT INVITATION OF CONTACT GROUP IN DISCUSSIONS ON NAMIBIA. IT SHOULD BE POINTED OUT THAT THE FIVE DID NOT FUND SWAPO TRAVEL FOR NON-CONTACT GROUP ACTIVITIES SUCH AS THE UNGA SPECIAL SESSION AND THE RECENT SECURITY COUNCIL MEETING. TALKING POINTS FOR SOUTH AFRICA SHOULD EMPHASIZE CONTACT GROUP'S BELIEF THAT SWAPO WOULD NOT HAVE ATTENDED DISCUSSIONS WERE
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ITS EXPENSES NOT COVERED.

3. WE ARE ALSO DISTURBED BY VAN HEERDEN'S WARNING THAT SOUTH AFRICA MAY HAVE TO RESPOND TO SWAPO AND MPLA BUILDUP, SUPPORTED LOGISTICALLY BY CUBAN UNITS, ON ANGOLAN SIDE OF BORDER. WE HAVE SEEN RECENT INTELLIGENCE REPORTS FROM UNITA SOURCES OF MAJOR MPLA OFFENSIVE AGAINST UNITA IN SOUTHERN ANGOLA, REPUTEDLY SUPPORTED BY CUBAN TROOPS AND AIRCRAFT, SWAPO UNITS, AND KATANGAN GENDARMES. ALTHOUGH SOUTH AFRICAN INTELLIGENCE GENERALLY APPEARS WELL INFORMED ON SWAPO'S ACTIVITIES, WE SUGGEST POSSIBILITY THAT SOUTH AFRICANS MAY HAVE NOTED PREPARATIONS FOR THIS OFFENSIVE AND MISINTERPRETED ITS OBJECTIVE. CONTACT GROUP APPROACH TO SOUTH AFRICANS SHOULD NOTE THIS POSSIBILITY AND EMPHASIZE VITAL IMPORTANCE OF DOING NOTHING WHICH COULD JEOPARDIZE FRAGILE NAMIBIA SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT.

4. CONTACT GROUP MAY WISH TO MAKE BILATERAL APPROACH TO NEW YORK REPRESENTATIVES OF FRONT-LINE STATES PER REFTEL A, PARTICULARLY ANGOLA, REQUESTING THAT SWAPO, TOO, BE URGED TO DO NOTHING TO JEOPARDIZE THE NAMIBIA

SETTLEMENT.

5. IN ANY APPROACH TO SAG, THE FIVE SHOULD PRESS HARD
FOR MAXIMUM FLEXIBILITY REGARDING VOTER REGISTRATION.

IT IS CLEAR THAT THIS MATTER MUST BE RESOLVED IN A WAY
WHICH WILL EMBARRASS NEITHER STEYN NOR AHTISAARI. THE
ADMINISTRATOR GENERAL'S PROCLAMATION AND THE SUBSEQUENT
REGISTRATION OF VOTERS IN NAMIBIA PRIOR TO ARRIVAL OF
UNSR MAY HAVE ATTRACTED TOO MUCH INTERNATIONAL ATTENTION
TO PERMIT AHTISAARI TO ACCEPT REGISTRATION PROGRAM AS A
FAIT ACCOMPLI, EVEN IF HE WERE INCLINED TO DO SO. THERE-
FORE, ELEMENTS OF COMPROMISE SEEM NECESSARY ON BOTH
SIDES IF QUESTION OF VOTER REGISTRATION IS NOT TO ASSUME
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A DEGREE OF THREATENING IMPORTANCE BEYOND ITS TRUE SIGNI-
FICANCE FOR NAMIBIA SETTLEMENT. VANCE

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